

Fact Sheet:

Health Risk Behavior of Alternative High School Students

From CDC's 1998 National Alternative High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey

	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Injury-related behaviors</u>			
Rarely or never wore seat belts	22.8	34.0	29.0
Rode with a driver who had been drinking alcohol ¹	49.3	54.0	51.9
Carried a weapon ²	18.4	44.8	32.9
In a physical fight ³	50.4	67.2	59.7
Attempted suicide ³	20.0	12.1	15.7
<u>Tobacco use</u>			
Current cigarette use ⁴	59.8	67.7	64.1
Current smokeless tobacco use ⁵	2.5	13.0	8.3
Current cigar use ⁴	25.9	48.2	38.3
<u>Alcohol and other drug use</u>			
Current alcohol use ⁴	60.0	68.3	64.5
Episodic heavy drinking ⁶	42.9	55.4	49.8
Current marijuana use ¹	46.7	58.2	53.0
Current cocaine use ¹	13.1	17.1	15.3
<u>Sexual behaviors</u>			
Ever had sexual intercourse	87.7	87.9	87.8
Four or more sexual partners during lifetime	43.1	56.4	50.4
Currently sexually active ⁷	70.9	66.4	68.5
Condom use during last sexual intercourse ⁸	36.1	54.6	45.9
Birth control pill use before last sexual intercourse ⁸	15.9	12.6	14.1
<u>Dietary behaviors</u>			
Thought they were overweight	33.3	19.1	25.5
Took diet pills to lose weight or control weight gain ⁹	11.4	3.3	7.0
Took laxatives or vomited to lose weight or control weight gain ⁹	10.3	3.7	6.7
<u>Physical activity</u>			
Participated in vigorous physical activity ¹⁰	31.8	58.8	46.8
Attended PE class daily	15.5	21.8	19.0

¹ On ≥ 1 times during the 30 days preceding the survey.

² Such as a gun, knife, or club on ≥ 1 of the 30 days preceding the survey.

³ On ≥ 1 times during the 12 months preceding the survey.

⁴ On ≥ 1 of the 30 days preceding the survey.

⁵ Such as chewing tobacco or snuff on ≥ 1 of the 30 days preceding the survey.

⁶ Drank ≥ 5 drinks of alcohol in a row on at least one occasion on ≥ 1 of the 30 days preceding the survey.

⁷ Had sexual intercourse during the 3 months preceding the survey.

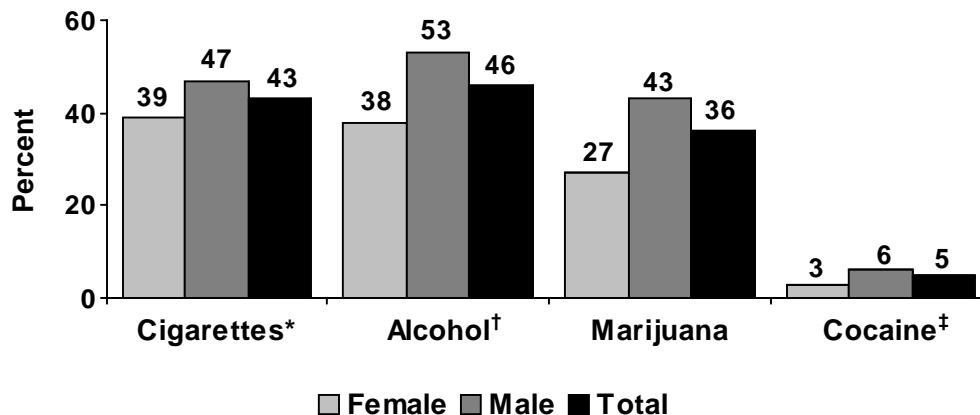
⁸ Among currently sexually active students.

⁹ During the 30 days preceding the survey.

¹⁰ Activities that caused sweating and hard breathing for ≥ 20 minutes on ≥ 3 of the 7 days preceding the survey.



Percentage of Alternative High School Students Who Initiated Drug-Related Behavior Before Age 13 Years, by Sex



* Smoked a whole cigarette

† Other than a few sips

‡ Including powder, "crack," or freebase

About the National Alternative High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey (ALT-YRBS)

The 1998 ALT-YRBS measured priority health-risk behaviors among a nationally representative sample of students in grades 9-12 attending alternative high schools. Alternative high schools serve approximately 280,000 students nationwide who are at high risk for failing or dropping out of regular high school or who have been expelled from regular high school because of illegal activity or behavioral problems. Alternative high schools provide important opportunities for delivering health promotion education and services to these young people. A total of 8,918 students completed questionnaires in 115 schools. The school response rate was 81%, and the student response rate was 82%, resulting in an overall response rate of 66%.

For More Information

For additional information about the ALT-YRBS, contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Adolescent and School Health, 4770 Buford Highway, NE, Mailstop K-33, Atlanta, GA 30341-3717; telephone (770)488-3257; Internet <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash>.